I-Corps Webinar

I-Corps Webinar Agenda

- Background
- Program Details
  - Eligibility
  - Before Submitting a Proposal
  - Project Proposal
  - Budget
  - Curriculum
  - Demo
- Expectations
- Frequent Questions
- Q&A Session

I-Corps Program – Some Background

- Leverages NSF investments in research -- lineage of previous support
- Small grants to focus on creating a commercialization roadmap
    Addresses the "Ditch of Death"
- Nimble funding -- Immediate assessment
- Projects are team-based -- commercialization is team effort
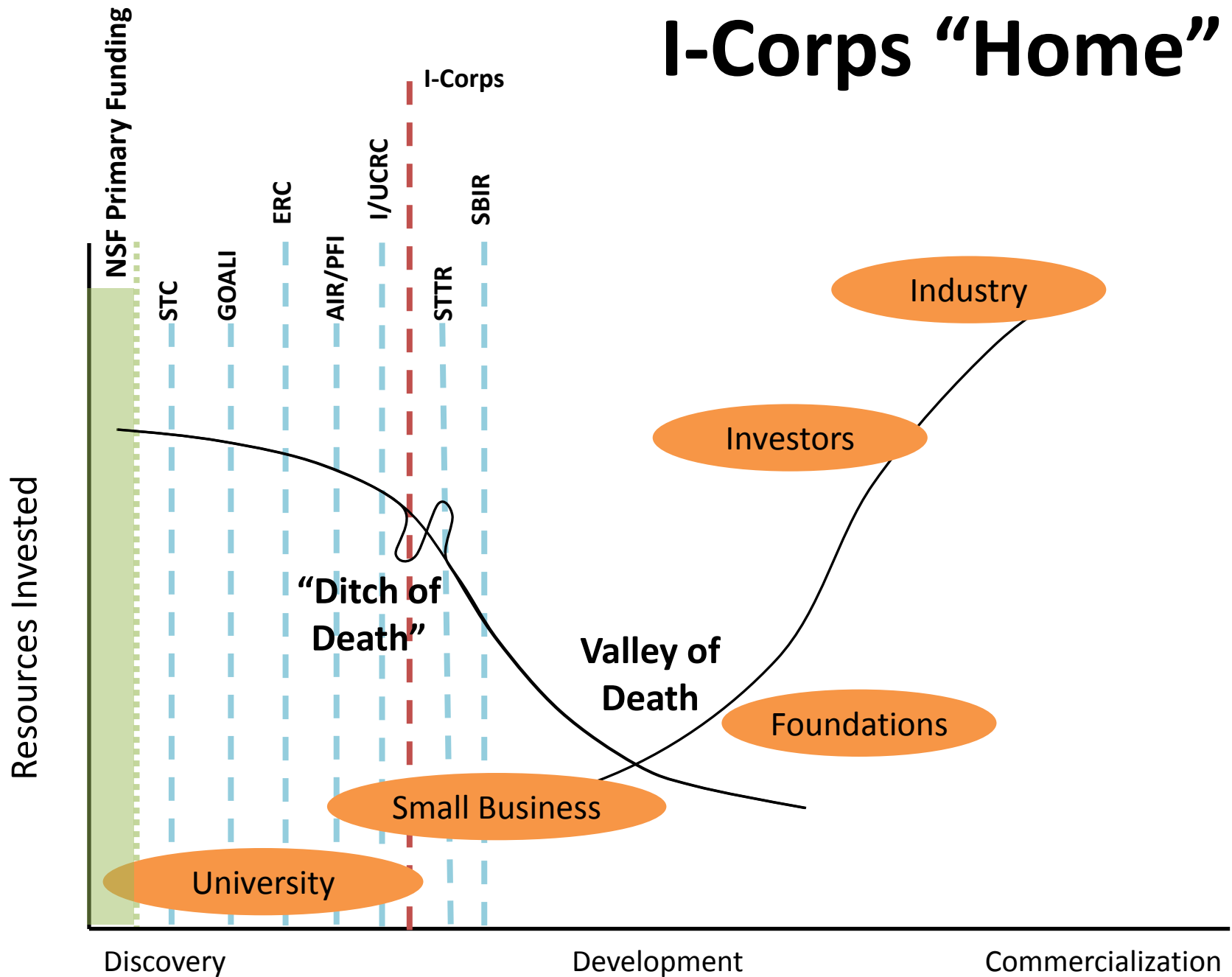- Process-oriented -- Curriculum-focused

I-Corps – Some Background

- NSF-Wide, Public-Private partnership to
  - support the development of technologies, products and processes
- Purpose: to provide access to resources to help determine the readiness to transition technology previously supported by NSF
- Creates a national network
  - Scientists, engineers, innovators, business leaders and entrepreneurs

I-Corps "Home"

I-Corps Program Details (Eligibility)

- PI: NSF award

  (current or expired no more than 5 years ago)

- Must have I-Corps team in place at initial contact

- Must be available for off-site Workshops and on-site Curriculum (entire team)

- Serious time commitment
  - Consistent with start-up mentality

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I-Corps Program Details:
First – Form your I-Corps Team

- Entrepreneurial Lead
  - Post-doc or Student to move project forward

Credit: © 2011 JupiterImages Corp.

- I-Corps Mentor
  - Domain-relevant volunteer guide
  - Proximity is better

- PI
  - Researcher with current or previous award

I-Corps Program Details:
Second, prepare an Executive Summary

- Relate critical information in your Executive Summary (**1 page**)
    - Composition of the team proposing to undertake the commercialization feasibility research
    - Relevant current/previous NSF awards
    - Brief description of the potential commercial impact
    - Brief description of the *current* commercialization plan

I-Corps Program Details: Third, Contact NSF

- Who within NSF can act as your advocate? Start with your advocate or Topic-specific PD or combination and send them your Executive Summary

Topic-Specific Program Directors
Steve Ellis – BIO
Anita La Salle – CISE
Don Millard – EHR
Babu DasGupta – ENG
Raffaella Montelli – GEO
Mary Galvin-Donoghue – MPS
Irene Qualters – OCI
David Croson – SBE

I-Corps Cognizant Program Officers
Errol Arkilic
Babu DasGupta
Anita La Salle

I-Corps Program Details: What will happen next?

- One of NSF's I-Corp Management Team members will contact you to set up a telephone conference call that includes your entire team and NSF-ers responsible for I-Corps. If this interview part of the process goes well, …

- Another conference call will be set up with your team, the NSF-ers, and a group of Instructors from the I-Corps Program. If this part goes well, you will be asked to submit a proposal.

I-Corps Program Details
Your Project Proposal

- Read solicitation 11-560 – (but don't submit before completing the initial processes)
- Written authorization from Cognizant PD required to submit proposal – sent after phone interviews
- 5-page proposal
  - Team (2 pages)
  - NSF Lineage (1 Page)
  - Potential Commercial Impact (1 page)
  - Project Plan/Demo (1 page)
- Rolling process, Quarterly batches, FCFS
- 4-week turnaround to award, Internal Review

Program Details (Budget)

- $50 K per award
  - Capped at 10% IDC ($5K)
  - $45K in direct costs (includes travel for three team members to two immersion sessions plus registration fee)
- 21 awards in Fall 2011, 24 in March 2012, 55 in July 2012.
- Approximately 250 awards in FY13

I-Corps Curriculum

- Based on hypothesis-driven business-model discovery
  - pioneered by Stanford and Steve Blank (see the E-245 blog for a preview)
- Focuses on addressing market risk
- Requires getting out of the lab
  - **AT LEAST 15 hours of prep per week**

- **Mandatory** for all I-Corps participants
  - Attend 3-day course
    - (for Fall 2012 Cohort #1, dates are: **October 1-3, GA Tech**)
    - (for Fall 2012 Cohort #2, dates are: **October 9-11, Univ. Mich**)

  - Participate in 5 follow-on webinars with team presentations/interactions
    - (for Fall 2012 Cohort #1, Web dates are: **Tuesdays from noon until 3 p.m. Eastern, October 9, 16, 23, 30, and November 6**)
    - (for Fall 2012 Cohort #2, Web dates are: **Mondays from 1 p.m. until 4 p.m. Eastern, October 15, 22, 29, November 5 and 12**)

  - Attend 2 days of demos/lessons learned
    - (for Fall 2012 Cohort #1, dates are: **November 12-13**)
    - (for Fall 2012 Cohort #2, dates are: **November 29-30**)

After I-Corps Curriculum comes the I-Corps Project Plan/Demo

- Must be within striking distance to product or process demonstration
  - remember it is $50 K and 3-6 months
- Demo description is up to your team
  - Proof of concept
  - Mockup
  - Working prototype

I-Corps -- Expected Results

- Funded Project Deliverables
  - Technology demonstration
  - Technology disposition: Go/No Go
  - Commercialization Roadmap: Assuming Go
- Program Outcomes
  - Functioning network of Mentors/Advisors
  - Scientist and Engineers trained as Entrepreneurs (who pass on their knowledge to students)
  - Increased impact of NSF-funded basic research

I-Corps – Some Common Questions

- What can be included in direct costs?
  - ~$10K in travel and registration for two trips to course-site for entire team (depending on proximity)
  - Stipend for Entrepreneurial Lead
  - Travel costs to customers/partners/stakeholders
  - Machining, materials, software, licenses, etc for prototype or proof-of-concept, as appropriate

- Unallowable:
  - Stipend/consulting fees for I-Corps Mentor
  - Legal Fees (Startup, IP protection)

I-Corps – Some Common Questions

- Who makes a good mentor?
  - Someone with the right "rolodex" – contacts in your area of commercialization are critical for "getting out of the lab"
  - Someone who has entrepreneurial experience
  - Someone who has business expertise in your sector
  - Contact your Tech Transfer Office for ideas

More Information

- I-Corps website:

  www.nsf.gov/i-corps

- Monthly webinars – first Tuesday of the month.

- View a video containing feedback from I-Corps veteran participants at:

  http://www.nsf.gov/news/special_reports/i-corps/program.jsp

Questions?